

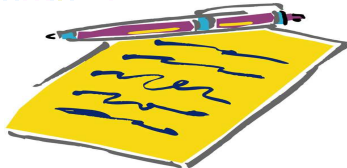


THE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH CONNECTIONS

First United Methodist Church

Mexia, Texas

April, 2010



...*“A Yankees Cup?”*...

Last week ESPN had a great story about a boy visiting his grandparents. His grandparents were diehard Yankees fans and one afternoon he wanted something to drink. His grandmother offered him some water in a Yankees glass but the boy refused the water! He was not a Yankees fan and would not dare take a drink from a Yankees glass. So he drank water from the tap using his hands. There was another story involving loyalty and sports. This time it involved an old Baltimore Colts fan. As many of you may remember the Baltimore Colts moved from Baltimore to Indianapolis in a surprise move. It happened in the middle of the night when a Mayflower moving truck showed up at the Colts' facility to move the team. This fan from Baltimore refuses to this day to use Mayflower because they were the trucking company that moved his beloved team! Now that is what I call loyalty!

We are loyal to all sorts of things in this life -- sports teams, businesses, family, friends, associations and clubs, etc., and there is nothing wrong with loyalty. In fact, loyalty when properly placed, shows great character and commitment. The problem, of course, is when we are loyal to the wrong things and give our time to the wrong things. We have just completed the Lenten season where we reflect on our spirituality and hopefully many of us have come to understand that our ultimate loyalty is to Jesus Christ. We are people who live in the Spirit of God and our loyalty is not to the passing things of this world but to the love and grace of God in Jesus. In Romans 8 Paul said it beautifully, "For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace." (Romans 8:5-6) May God grant you grace and peace as you remain loyal to Jesus Christ and the work of God's kingdom.

In Christ,

Brad

New Stephen Ministers Commissioned



Sunday, March 21, 2010 was a joyous occasion at our church. Four lay people from our congregation were commissioned into a special ministry of care and concern for others as Stephen Ministers. The Stephen Ministers commissioned were Michael Miller, Starlene Yelverton, Sandy Imes, and Lois Willett. This rite of commissioning culminates a period of extensive training and preparation for caring ministry. Our Stephen Ministers have studied and practiced skills in such areas as dealing with feelings, crisis intervention, asserting oneself with gentleness and firmness, and numerous other topics to prepare them to help people who are experiencing problems in their lives. Now that they are commissioned, these Stephen Ministers will be assigned to minister in our congregation and community, working with people who are experiencing such life crisis as hospitalization, retirement, financial setback, the loss of a loved one, or any of a number of other difficulties people face in daily living.

We thank God for our new Stephen Ministers and their gifts of caring and listening. Their ministries will increase greatly the overall ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ at First United Methodist Church here in Mexia. Please keep these people in your prayers as they carry the love of Christ to their care receivers.

Pam Crider and Donna Williford

Thoughts from our new Stephen Ministers

Starlene Yelverton—Loving Jesus is so easy, I hope to show that love through Stephen Ministry to others. I am very grateful and humbled to be a part of this caring group of Christians wanting to help others by sharing the love of Christ.

Sandy Imes—The grace of God is bestowed on both the receiver of Christian care and the Stephen Minister to live a peaceful and love filled life. What an awesome gift!

Lois Willett— For me Stephen Ministry training was a new journey into learning about myself and others through a bible based study program. Group members came very close as we learned to be better listeners, supportive of one another through group activities, and to pray about guidance for our training. Now with listening, praying, and bible reading, we hope to help others who are struggling with crisis situations. Actually, I think we all learned so much about ourselves through the months of this program.

Michael Miller—Each of us is called to use the talents that have been given to me and to give to others and Stephen's Ministry allows me to do this and to utilize some of the talents that I have been given. Additionally, through the time spent in training for the Stephen's Ministry, I have had the opportunity to develop relationships with those in the training and our leaders that are special. We have had the opportunity to learn together, to pray with and for one another and to explore our faith and understanding with others as we go through the process. During the 50 hours or so of training, we have also had the opportunity to laugh and enjoy the times we shared. Overall this has been a wonderful experience and as we move forward, I look forward with great anticipation, the times we will continue to meet and share our experiences and continue to learn and grow together.

***Message from the United Methodist Women:
UMW Day Circle, Secretary Johnnie Christian....***

Our members were blessed by a Program entitled "Call to Prayer and Self Denial" presented by Cheryl Karkheck. Also, it was requested that if any members of UMW (or the congregation in general) have copies of the magazine "Response" dated prior to 2009 and wish to donate them to our Church library, please contact Bette Thetford at 562-2643. "Response" magazines are available for review by any Church member in the Church library! There are other books available as well. GO SEE!!!!!!

Mary Shelby read to us an interesting article concerning how we might not just "GIVE UP" things during Lent, but how we might "GIVE" things during Let, i.e., learning to "forgive" when someone hurts your feelings instead of holding a grudge against them; or, "GIVE" extra love where and when needed. T'was a great reminder for all.

Our next meeting is 10 a.m., April 19th, 2010. Love to have you there!

Parley Wiggins, UMW Night Circle, Sue Franks, President...

Parley Wiggins Circle met Monday evening, March 15th, in the Church Library. We welcomed Bette Thetford who joined us to share information concerning our UMW budget and to answer any questions we might have. This was especially helpful since we were making our pledges for the year. Other business included discussing ways to honor our graduates this spring. Carol Ann Dawley then led us in a program entitled "For the Love of God" based on St. John's letters. The points brought out were especially meaningful during this Lenten Season. The meeting ended with fellowship as we enjoyed refreshments furnished by Diane Burks.

Relay for Life April 23rd

Contact Vicki Watson if you would like to purchase a memorial/luminary, cost is \$10.00. FUMC has a team and will be at the event from 7 p.m.-to approximately 10 p.m. walking toward the cure for cancer. All donations can be made to Vicki Watson, or to FUMC designated special offering. Additional information on how you can support and help at the 2010 Relay for Life event can be found on the FUMC website. Vicki has forms to sign for walking. Snacks and drinks are also welcomed from those who can not make the event but like to help nourish those who are.

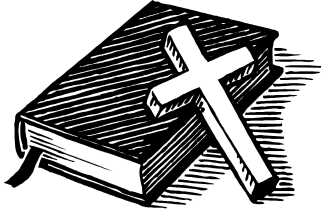


Thank You to the FUMC Community!

During the last five plus years I have enjoyed working for and with you. I have formed many friendships that I will treasure always. In retirement Jim & I will be doing some traveling and most importantly spending time with our seven grandchildren. This is not goodbye but so long for now.

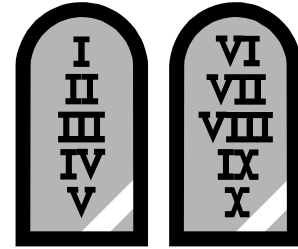
A very special thank you for the Kindle book reader and gift certificate. As an avid reader this is just the best gift you could have given me. God Bless you all.

Mary Benson



MYF

Methodist Youth Fellowship News
From Youth Director Jill Flatt



DO YOU know the 10 commandments?? In order??? Do you know where they are in the Bible??? Why don't you ask one of our youth?? Mrs. Gayle McKeever and I have been working with the youth on memorizing the 10 commandments for about three weeks. We set a date, March 10th as the date they had to recite the commandments to me in order. They said they would do it for a prize. SO, we reviewed them in Sunday school, and we reviewed them before each Wednesday lesson. I was so excited when I learned that some were even reviewing them while in school. I set up in the Adult Sunday school room and they came in one by one to recite them. To my surprise, they were nervous!! All of them did an outstanding job, and they enjoyed the challenge and the reward.

The youth are planning a trip to Dallas on Friday, April 16th to The Rock & Worship ROADSHOW at the American Airline center. More information at <http://therockandworshiproadshow.com>. It will cost \$10 to get in the door (no tickets are necessary) and about \$10 for the night meal. This is a family event so everyone is welcome to join the fun. We will leave at 4 pm on Friday 4/16. I have no idea when we will return.

THEN On Saturday, April 17th the youth will help set up and serve during the Fish Fry. We will be responsible for setting up the tables and serving drinks and desserts. After we clean up, we will spend the night in the Fellowship Hall. If you want to stay the night, you must help at the Fish Fry.

Upcoming Events: April 16th -Trip to Dallas – Concert.
April 17th - Fish Fry / Lock
April 25th - Movie Night

Wednesday Night Meals

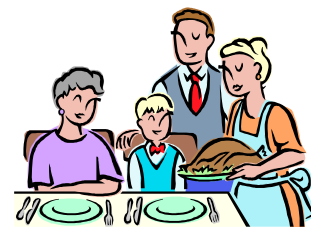
(Serving begins at 5:00 p.m. each Wednesday)

April 7th: Pancakes with fresh fruit, Sausage

April 14th: Taco Salad, Chips and Salsa, Hot Crackers, Dessert

April 21st: Cowboy Cornbread, Salad, Dessert

April 28th: Sloppy Joes, Cole Slaw, Baked beans, Dessert



Message from Preschool Director, Sherry Miller.....

First Methodist Preschool will celebrate 31 years in ministry on April 24th, 2010. It will be an exciting morning at the Preschool and the parents, church family, and community are invited to join the fun.

The Open House emphasis this year is “Dinosaurumpus”. From April 12th – April 23rd we will have daily puppet shows featuring Polly the Paleontologist and her Assistant Anna. Other puppet characters will be General Dino, Fossil, Steggy, Trisha, Tyro, and Sloopy. The dinosaurs have many adventures in Sludgy Swamp as they take care of a special Dinosaur Egg (named Sloopy). Each dinosaur wants Sloopy to look like them because they each think they are the best. In the end they learn that each one is special in their own way but none is better than the other. They learn that God makes each of us special and we are never just alike.

As the children learn about dinosaurs, they will enjoy activities in cooking, crafts, singing, games and more. Our unit will strengthen print awareness, phonics, and comprehension. And we are going to have so much fun! The puppet shows will be held every morning in the Preschool lunchroom during these two weeks from 10:00 am – 10:30 am.

At the Dinosaurumpus Festival on Saturday, April 24th, there will be many activities for the entire family. Following the festival the dance students will present their annual recital at 10:15 in the Preschool Lunchroom. Everyone is invited to attend.

All the Preschool Staff Members will be present to direct the carnival activities outside and greet parents and friends throughout the morning.

KIDS SHOP MEETINGS & MENUS

Wednesday – 5:15pm to 7:00pm

Wed. 31st –Easter Egg Hunt & Pizza

Wed. 7th — Chicken Nuggets & Mac-n-Cheese

SATURDAY 10th – MOVIE & Lunch in Fellowship Hall (3:30 to 6pm)

Wed. 14th --Kids Spaghetti

Wed. 21st -- Slider Burgers

Wed. 28th -- Hot Dogs

For more information call Tammy McCulloch 903-390-1751 or Kellie Candy 214-214-2315

Memorial Day

Memorial Day is often seen as the first holiday of the summer season with very little thought given to the real meaning of the holiday. I have enclosed some historical information regarding the reason for the holiday below and to invite everyone to a special service that we will be having at FUMC- Mexia at 7:00 PM on Memorial Day. We would like any interested persons to meet at 5:30 PM on April 7th in the Fellowship Hall to discuss any thoughts or ideas that they have to make this a special observation of this special day. We will only meet for about 30 minutes, so come and grab dinner and join us.

Memorial Day was officially proclaimed on May 5th, 1868 by General John Logan, national commander of the Grand Army of the Republic, in his [General Order No. 11](#), and was first observed on May 30th, 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. The first state to officially recognize the holiday was New York in 1873. By 1890 it was recognized by all of the northern states. The South refused to acknowledge the day, honoring their dead on separate days until after World War I (when the holiday changed from honoring just those who died fighting in the Civil War to honoring Americans who died fighting in any war). It is now celebrated in almost every State on the last Monday in May (passed by Congress with the National Holiday Act of 1971 (P.L. 90 - 363) to ensure a three day weekend for Federal holidays), though several southern states have an additional separate day for honoring the Confederate war dead: January 19 in Texas, April 26 in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and Mississippi; May 10 in South Carolina; and June 3rd (Jefferson Davis' birthday) in Louisiana and Tennessee.

In 1915, inspired by the poem "[In Flanders Fields](#)," Moina Michael replied with her own poem:

*We cherish too, the Poppy red
That grows on fields where valor led,
It seems to signal to the skies
That blood of heroes never dies.*

She then conceived of an idea to wear red poppies on Memorial Day in honor of those who died serving the nation during war. She was the first to wear one, and sold poppies to her friends and co-workers with the money going to benefit servicemen in need. Later a Madam Guerin from France was visiting the United States and learned of this new custom started by Ms. Michael and when she returned to France, made artificial red poppies to raise money for war orphaned children and widowed women. This tradition spread to other countries. In 1921, the Franco-American Children's League sold poppies nationally to benefit war orphans of France and Belgium. The League disbanded a year later and Madam Guerin approached the VFW for help. Shortly before Memorial Day in 1922 the VFW became the first veterans' organization to nationally sell poppies. Two years later their "[Buddy" Poppy program](#) was selling artificial poppies made by disabled veterans. In 1948 the US Post Office honored Ms. Michael for her role in founding the National Poppy movement by issuing [a red 3 cent postage stamp](#) with her likeness on it.

Traditional observance of Memorial Day has diminished over the years. Many Americans nowadays have forgotten the meaning and traditions of Memorial Day. At many cemeteries, the graves of the fallen are increasingly ignored, neglected. Most people no longer remember the proper flag etiquette for the day. While there are towns and cities that still hold

Memorial Day parades, many have not held a parade in decades. Some people think the day is for honoring any and all dead, and not just those fallen in service to our country.

There are a few notable exceptions. Since the late 50's on the Thursday before Memorial Day, the 1,200 soldiers of the 3d U.S. Infantry place small American flags at each of the more than 260,000 gravestones at Arlington National Cemetery. They then patrol 24 hours a day during the weekend to ensure that each flag remains standing. In 1951, the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts of St. Louis began placing flags on the 150,000 graves at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery as an annual Good Turn, a practice that continues to this day. More recently, beginning in 1998, on the Saturday before the observed day for Memorial Day, the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts place a candle at each of approximately 15,300 grave sites of soldiers buried at Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park on Marye's Heights (the [Luminaria Program](#)). And in 2004, Washington D.C. held its first Memorial Day parade in over 60 years.

Michael Miller

April Birthdays



2nd—Jackie Tidwell, 4th—Mary Ann Ray, Vicki Watson, 5th—Ed Marcotte, 9th—Nancy Hughes, 11th—Tyler Flatt, 12th—Lewis Blunt, 14th—Brandy Agnew, 15th—Regan Hullum, 17th—Kathleen Flowers, Linda Kegerreis, 19th —Bob Wright, Ed Cunningham, Dan Franks, Trey Fulmer, Mike Ray, Shelli Sears, 20th—Cindy Williford, 23rd—Grayson Edwards, 26th—Michael Miller, 27th—Janise Shivers, 30th—Lula Goswick

April Anniversaries

5th—Wayne & Nancy Hughes
7th—Buddy & Donna Williford



Memorial



Lela Kerley: Frances Lenamon
Bill Goswick: D & Carol Blain
Nell Robinson: Martha Carlson, Lula Goswick,
James & Diana Bradley, Ed & Mary Marcotte,
Dollie Chubbuck & Rudolph Barnett
Pat Neill: Vicki & Gary Watson, Linda & Craig Kegerreis,
Johnnie & Kenneth Christian, Carol Ann & James Dawley,
Mr. & Mrs. Paul Russell, Mary Shelby, Sissy & Jeff Austin,
Jim & Mary Benson, Helen & John Neill, Nell Warren & Vicki & Bill Hutchinson,
Susan & James Anderson, Jr., Lula Goswick,
Blake, Tamra, Cheyenne, Hunter & Sage Boteler,
Marcus & Molly Frost



New Beginnings Saturday Night Praise and Worship On Saturday, April 10th we will be starting a new worship service. The service will be lay-led and will be more casual than our Sunday morning service. We will have the service every Saturday at 6:00 p.m. and encourage those who are unable to attend our Sunday morning service to join us. If you play a musical instrument such as guitar, drums, piano, etc., contact Gary Watson or Joe Paschal. They are looking for more musicians to join in the rotation. Please be in prayer for this new ministry as we reach out to our community.

Administrative Board Meeting -- Thursday, April 15th On Thursday, April 15th we will be having a church-wide Administrative Board meeting at 7:00 p.m. Among the topics to be discussed, we will be hearing two very important reports from the PPR Committee and Trustee Committee. The PPR Committee will be making a recommendation for the addition of a children's coordinator to our church staff. The Trustee Committee will be making a very important presentation on the possibility of our church having a facility study conducted in the near future. We will have other items to discuss, but these two are very important and we would like to have as much feedback as possible from the congregation.

Free Community Fish Fry -- April 17th We will be having our annual Free Community Fish Fry on Saturday, April 17th from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Be sure and invite your friends in the community. We will have invitation cards available at church on Sunday, as well as in the church office if you would like to pick some up. After the fish fry we will have our Saturday night worship service beginning at 6:00 p.m.

Glen Lake Summer Camp Summer Camp is just around the corner at Glen Lake in Glen Rose, TX. Glen Lake is our camp for the Central Texas Conference. If you have children from the 1st grade up you can register them for camp at www.glenlake.org. The website has all the information you will need -- cost, dates, what to pack, etc.

Your Church Staff

Rev. Brad Brittain, Pastor
Dr. Richard Morgan, Director of Music
Wynona Lipsett, Organist
Jill Flatt, Youth Director
Sandy Imes, Administrative Assistant/Fiscal Coordinator
Cass Candy, Building Maintenance
Barbara Owens, Cleaning

Office Hours
Monday-Thursday
9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. - 1:00 -4:00 p.m.
Friday 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.